

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-10

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USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L MBFR VIENNA 0364

MBFR NEGOTIATIONS

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR NEGOTIATIONS: STATEMENT TO BE GIVEN BY THE NETHERLANDS
REP DEVOS AT THE JULY 17 ALLIED PRESS CONFERENCE

THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF THE PRESS STATEMENT TO BE GIVEN
BY THE ALLIED SPOKESMAN (NETHERLANDS REP DEVOS) AT THE
JULY 17 POST-PLenary PRESS CONFERENCE AT 1345 VIENNA TIME.
AT THAT TIME THE CLASSIFICATION EMBARGO CAN BE REMOVED.
THE STATEMENT WAS APPROVED AT THE JULY 14 MEETING OF THE
AD HOC GROUP.

BEGIN TEXT:

1. THIS HAS BEEN A SOMEWHAT DISAPPOINTING ROUND IN THE VIENNA
NEGOTIATIONS. I AGAIN HAVE NO PROGRESS TO REPORT TODAY. THE VIEWS OF
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BOTH SIDES ARE STILL FAR APART ON THE MAJOR ISSUES UNDER DISCUSSION.

NEVERTHELESS, THE WESTERN PARTICIPANTS IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS REMAIN UNDISCOURAGED FOR THE LONGER RUN. WE STILL THINK IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REACH AGREEMENT BECAUSE AN AGREEMENT WILL SERVE THE INTERESTS OF BOTH SIDES.

2. WE FIND IT DISAPPOINTING THAT THE EAST HAS STILL NOT RESPONDED IN A POSITIVE AND CONSTRUCTIVE WAY TO OUR BASIC REDUCTION PROPOSALS. AS YOU KNOW, ONE OF OUR BASIC AIMS IS TO GAIN EASTERN ACCEPTANCE OF THE CONCEPT THAT THE OVERALL GOAL OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF APPROXIMATE PARITY BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES IN GROUND FORCES IN CENTRAL EUROPE IN THE FORM OF A COMMON CEILING ON GROUND FORCE MANPOWER PLUS REDUCTION OF SOVIET TANKS. WE THINK THIS IS A FAIR AND REASONABLE GOAL. WE THINK THAT ACHIEVEMENT OF PARITY IN GROUND FORCES WOULD SIGNIFICANTLY ENHANCE STABILITY IN CENTRAL EUROPE. IT WOULD REMOVE INCENTIVES FOR EXPENSIVE AND POTENTIALLY DANGEROUS ARMS RACES IN THE AREA. IT WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE THE PROSPECT OF AN OUTBREAK OF ARMED CONFLICT IN EUROPE, WITH THE RISK OF ESCALATION TO THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

3. THE CONCEPT OF PARITY IS A GENERALLY RECOGNIZED PRINCIPLE IN OTHER IMPORTANT ARMS CONTROL NEGOTIATIONS. INDEED, THE SOVIET UNION HAS ITSELF INSISTED ON IT TIME AND AGAIN. WE DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE EAST WILL NOT ACCEPT THIS PRINCIPLE IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS. WE DO NOT SEE HOW IT IS POSSIBLE TO REACH A MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE AGREEMENT ON ANY OTHER BASIS. WE DO NOT SEE HOW THE EAST CAN EXPECT THE WEST TO AGREE TO FREEZE ITSELF INTO A POSITION OF ENDURING INFERIORITY THROUGH A BINDING INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENT, AS THE EAST IS ASKING US TO DO.

4. WE FIND IT DISAPPOINTING THAT, AFTER SIX ROUNDS OF NEGOTIATION, THE EAST HAS STILL NOT RESPONDED POSITIVELY TO OUR ARGUMENTS ON THESE POINTS. THE STANDARD EASTERN RESPONSE IS THAT OUR PROPOSALS REQUIRE LARGER EASTERN THAN WESTERN REDUCTIONS. BUT THE EAST HAS A VAST SUPERIORITY IN NUMBERS OF SOLDIERS AND TANKS IN THE AREA. WE DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE EAST FINDS IT NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN 150,000 MORE

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SOLDIERS IN THE AREA THAN THE WEST. WE DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY THE EAST FINDS IT NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN TWO AND A HALF TIMES AS MANY TANKS IN THE AREA AS THE WEST. NOR DO WE UNDERSTAND HOW THE EAST CAN REASONABLY CLAIM THAT IT WOULD BE RIGHT TO PRESERVE THESE DISPARITIES IN AN AGREEMENT, PARTICULARLY WHEN ONE CONSIDERS THAT THE SUPERPOWER ON THE EASTERN SIDE -- THE SOVIET UNION -- IS LOCATED IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT

TO THE AREA, WHILE THE SUPERPOWER ON THE WESTERN SIDE -- THE UNITED STATES -- IS FAR AWAY ACROSS THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

5. WE FIND IT DISAPPOINTING THAT THE EAST HAS NOT SO FAR BEEN WILLING TO ENGAGE IN A DIALOGUE WITH US ON THE IMPORTANT SUBJECT OF MEASURES ASSOCIATED WITH REDUCTIONS. AS YOU KNOW, THE AGREED SUBJECT MATTER OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS IS THE MUTUAL REDUCTION OF FORCES AND ARMAMENTS AND ASSOCIATED MEASURES IN CENTRAL EUROPE.

6. DURING THESE NEGOTIATIONS WE HAVE MADE A NUMBER OF SPECIFIC PROPOSALS FOR ASSOCIATED MEASURES. THESE HAVE INCLUDED MEASURES DESIGNED TO MAINTAIN THE STABILITY OF THE SITUATION RESULTING FROM REDUCTIONS. WHEN FORCES ARE REDUCED, IT IS ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT TH AT REMAINING US AND SOVIET FORCES NOT BE USED IN WAYS THAT COULD GIVE RISE TO MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND MISCALCULATIONS BY THE OTHER SIDE. WE HAVE YET TO RECEIVE A SUBSTANTIVE RESPONSE FROM THE EAST ON THE PROPOSALS WE HAVE MADE TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM.

7. NOR HAVE WE HAD A RESPONSE FROM THE EAST ON THE POINTS WE HAVE MADE TO THEM ABOUT VERIFICATION. THIS IS AN IMPORTANT MATTER. ONE O F OUR PURPOSES HERE IS TO SEEK TO OVERCOME NEARLY THREE DECADES OF MUTU AL SUSPICION AND MISTRUST BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. WE DO NOT THINK IT ENOUGH FOR EACH SIDE TO RELY SOLELY ON ITS NATIONAL MEANS TO VERIFY COMPLIANCE WITH A REDUCTION AGREEMENT. YET THE EAST HAS SO FAR EVADED DISCUSSION OF THIS IMPORTANT SUBJECT.

8. WE FIND IT NOT ENCOURAGING THAT, THROUGHOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS SO FAR, THE EAST HAS FAILED TO RESPOND IN AN ADEQUATE MANNER TO THE MANY DEMONSTRATIONS OF WESTERN FLEXIBILITY WE HAVE GIVEN: WE HAVE RESPONDED TO SPECIFIC EASTERN CRITICISMS OF OUR APPROACH BY
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MODIFYING IT IN SIGNIFICANT RESPECTS. THE EAST HAS CRITICIZED OUR PROPOSAL THAT ONLY THE TWO MAJOR POWERS -- THE US AND USSR -- REDUCE IN A FIRST PHASE, CLAIMING THAT THE OTHER WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WERE TRYING TO AVOID REDUCTIONS ALTOGETHER. TO MEET THIS POINT, WE HAVE OFFERED ASSURANCES THAT ALL REMAINING WESTERN DIRECT PARTICIPANTS WILL REDUCE IN A SECOND PHASE, AFTER SATISFACTORY FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENT HAS BEEN REACHED. THE EAST HAS OBJECTED THAT OUR APPROACH LEFT OPEN THE POSSIBILITY OF SIGNIFICANT INCREASES IN WESTERN EUROPEAN FORCES, FOLLOWING US FIRST PHASE REDUCTIONS. TO MEET THIS OBJECTION, WE HAVE OFFERED A FREEZE ON THE GROUND FORCE MANPOWER OF ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS IN THE AREA IN CONNECTION WITH A FIRST-PHASE AGREEMENT. THE EAST HAS OBJECTED THAT THE WESTERN PROPOSALS DID NOT COVER AIR FORCES. TO MEET THIS POINT, WE HAVE OFFERED TO FREEZE THE OVERALL LEVEL OF AIR FORCE

MANPOWER IN THE AREA IN CONNECTION WITH A FIRST-PHASE REDUCTION AGREEMENT. THESE LEVELS ARE APPROXIMATELY EQUAL FOR BOTH SIDES, WITH A SLIGHT ADVANTAGE FOR THE EAST. REGRETTABLY, THE EAST HAS THUS FAR BRUSHED ASIDE ALL THESE PROPOSALS AS INADEQUATE.

9. THE EAST HAS ALSO OFFERED TO MAKE CERTAIN LIMITED CHANGES IN ITS ORIGINAL REDUCTION PROPOSALS. IT HAS SUGGESTED A FEW PROCEDURAL MODIFICATIONS. WE HAVE DISCUSSED ALL THESE IN THE COURSE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. BUT WE STILL VIEW THESE MOES AS NOT CHANGING THE BASIC SUBSTANCE OF THE WARSAW PACT APPROACH TO REDUCTIONS.

10. WE ARE ALSO PUZZLED BY THE PERSISTENT EASTERN REFUSAL TO DISCUSS DATA WITH US. WE DO NOT UNDERSTAND HOW PARTICIPANTS CAN REACH AGREEMENT TO REDUCE FORCES WITHOUT SOME COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF THE FACTS OF THE SITUATION THEY ARE NEGOTIATING ABOUT, OR HOW ONE CAN PROPOSE, AS THE EAST IS DOING, TO REDUCE FORCE LEVELS BY A GIVEN PERCENTAGE WHILE REFUSING TO DISCUSS THE FORCE LEVELS TO WHICH THESE PERCENTAGES WOULD APPLY. WE HAVE GIVEN THE EAST TOTALS ON GROUND FORCE MANPOWER AND TANKS IN THE AREA AND OFFERED TO EXCHANGE AIR MANPOWER TOTALS. WHILE CONTESTING THE ACCURACY OF OUR FIGURES, THE EAST HAS GIVEN US NO FIGURES OF ITS OWN.

11. WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF ELABORATING ITS PROGRAM, THE WEST HAS PRESENTED IN THIS ROUND PROPOSALS DESIGNED TO SAFEGUARD THE SECURITY OF
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FLANK COUNTRIES IN AN AGREEMENT.

12. DESPITE THE DISAPPOINTMENTS I HAVE DESCRIBED, WE DO NOT DRAW PESSIMISTIC CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE PROSPECTS OF REACHING AGREEMENT IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS. AS I HAVE SAID BEFORE, WE CONSIDER THAT PROSPECTS DO EXIST FOR RECONCILING THE DIFFERING VIEWPOINTS OF WEST AND EAST ON THE INDIVIDUAL ISSUES, AND WE THINK WE HAVE SHOWN WAYS TO DO THIS. I VIEW OF THE FACT THAT PROGRESS IN THESE NEGOTIATIONS IS A MAJOR TEST OF DETENTE AND THAT BOTH SIDES WILL RECOGNIZE THIS, WE ARE NOT DISCOURAGED ABOUT THE LONGER PROSPECTS. WE LOOK FORWARD TO FURTHER INTENSIVE DISCUSSION IN THE NEXT ROUND, DISCUSSION WHICH WE HOPE WILL BRING US CLOSER TO AN AGREEMENT. END TEXT.RESOR

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